

REMARKS:

- 1) Referring to item 9) of the Office Action Summary, and page 4 of the Office Action, the errors pointed out by the Examiner have been corrected. The Examiner's thorough review is appreciated. Please withdraw the objection to the specification.
- 2) Referring to the middle of page 4 of the Office Action, a computer word count and a manual count have confirmed that the original abstract did not exceed 150 words. Nonetheless, the abstract has now been amended editorially to make it even shorter. Please withdraw the objection to the abstract.
- 3) Referring to item 10) of the Office Action Summary, and pages 3 to 4 of the Office Action, the objection to the drawings has been avoided by amending the specification at page 4 line 8 to include the reference number "43". This amendment does not introduce any new matter because it merely generally describes what is expressly shown in the original drawings. The drawings and the specification now conform to one another. Please withdraw the objection, and indicate the acceptance of the drawings.

- 4) The claims have been amended as follows.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of prior claim 3.

Claim 14 has been amended into independent form, combining claims 1 + 10 + 14.

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Claim 15 has been amended into independent form, combining claims 1 + 10 + 15.

Claims 3 and 28 to 34 have been canceled.

Dependent claims have been amended for proper conformance or proper dependency in view of the above mentioned amendments.

These amendments merely involving claim combinations do not introduce any new matter. Entry thereof is requested.

- 5) Referring to pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the election of Species A is hereby affirmed. After the present amendment, claims 1, 2, 4 to 19 and 22 to 27 read on the elected Species A. Non-elected claims 20 and 21 remain withdrawn, but depend from claim 15, which generically encompasses the elected species as well as non-elected claims 20 and 21. Accordingly, if claim 15 is ultimately found allowable, the Examiner is respectfully requested to rejoin, consider and allow the dependent claims 20 and 21. Non-elected claims 28 to 34 have been canceled.
- 6) Referring to the second-to-last paragraph on page 4 of the Office Action, the clerical error pointed out in claim 9 has been corrected. The Examiner's thorough review in this regard is appreciated. Please withdraw the objection to claim 9.
- 7) Referring to the second-to-last paragraph on page 7 of the Office Action, the indication of allowable subject matter is appreciated. The allowable subject matter has been incorporated in the remaining independent claims 1, 14 and 15, as follows.

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Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of prior claims 1 + 3. Thus, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 4 to 13 and 22 to 27 are allowable.

Claim 14 has been amended into independent form incorporating the subject matter of prior claims 1 + 10 + 14. Thus, claim 14 is allowable.

Claim 15 has been amended into independent form incorporating the subject matter of prior claims 1 + 10 + 15. Thus, claim 15 and its dependent claims 16 to 21 are allowable.

- 8) Referring to pages 5 to 7 of the Office Action, the rejections of claims 1, 2, 6 to 13 and 22 to 27 as obvious over identified prior art have been obviated by the present amendment. Since each remaining independent claim 1, 14 and 15 now incorporates allowable subject matter from a previous non-rejected claim, as indicated above, the rejections do not apply against the present claims. Please withdraw the rejections.
- 9) Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, including all present claims 1, 2 and 4 to 27, are requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosures:
Transmittal Cover Sheet

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CERTIFICATE OF FAX TRANSMISSION:

I hereby certify that this correspondence with all indicated enclosures is being transmitted by telefax to (571) 273-8300 on the date indicated below, and is addressed to: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P. O. BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450.

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